GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:18
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2000
ILLEGAL TRADE IN ANIMAL PARTS
GADDAM GANGA REDDY

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the serious ecological imbalance caused owing to international market flourishing on the dead bodies of animal species ;

(b) if so, the action taken against the mafia controlling such business; and

(c) the action proposed against illegal trade in animal parts ?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) ,(b)&(c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERREDTO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a),(b)&(c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO 18 BY SHRI G. GA REDDY REGARDING ILLEGAL TRADE IN ANIMAL PARTS TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.11.2000.

(a),(b)&(c): Yes, Sir. Poaching and illegal trade of wildlife and its derivatives by the organised mafia has serious implications for the conservation of wildlife in the country. Poachers have, over the years, developed strong linkages with international mafia. They take full advantage of the increased conflict between man and wildlife and instigate the villagers to poach or assist in poaching those animals that fetch very high price in the international clandestine market. They also take advantage of the inadequate infra-structural facilities of the forest department out side the protected areas. The problem is also compounded by the degradation of the habitat of wild animals due to increase in the human and cattle population in and around the protected areas. The important wildlife products traded illegally from the country by the organised gangs include Musk, Rhino horns, Bear bile, Elephant tusk, Tiger skin and bones and Leopard skin and bones and Shahtoosh.

Government of India has taken following measures against these mafias for controlling such illegal activities:

(i) Regional and sub -regional offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centers in the country have been set up to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

(ii) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(iii) Central Bureau of Investigation has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute offenders involved in illegal activities.

(iv) Government of India provides financial and technical help to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. Project Tiger, Project Elephant, Development of National parks and Sanctuaries, Eco-Development in and Around Protected Areas, Beneficiary Oriented Tribal Development Programme etc for enhancing the capacity andinterest of the States so that they can protect the wildlife effectively. Financial assistance is also provided for establishing Strike Force and for providing arms to protection staff for combating the organised mafias. In addition, assistance is provided for giving rewards to informers for eliciting information about poachers and smugglers.

(v) A Special Co- ordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests for effective control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife. Many State Govts. have also set up similar committees at the State/ District level.

(vi) Periodic meetings are held with the State Govts. for effective monitoring of the protection measures for wildlife.

(vii) Govt. of India has streamlined its export import policy to curb smuggling of wildlife and its products from the country.

(viii) Govt. of India has enhanced the compensation amount for loss of human life due to attack of wild animals from Rs. 20,000 to Rs.

1.00 lakh to prevent retaliatory action by the people.